

REMARKS

Claims 1-10, 13-15, and 21 are pending in the present application. All pending claims have been allowed by the Examiner.

Claims 11, 12, 16-20, 22 and 26-30 have been canceled without disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Applicants reserve the right to continue prosecution of these claims by filing a Divisional application.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 22 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,226,604 to Ehara et al. Without conceding the appropriateness of this rejection, Applicants have canceled claim 22 in an effort to expedite prosecution. Accordingly, this rejection has been rendered moot.

Election/Restrictions

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner noted that claims 11, 12, 16-20, and 26-30 have been withdrawn from further consideration as being drawn to a nonelected invention. In order to make a complete reply to this final Office Action, Applicants have canceled these claims.

Comments on Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

In the previous Office Action of September 30, 2004, the Examiner provided a statement of reasons for allowance as to the subject matter of claims 1-10 and 13-15. While this statement focuses on particular features of the claims, Applicants wish to point out that the entire contents of each of the claims, considered as a whole, defines each of the allowable claims, not just the features cited by the Examiner. In other words, it is the claimed combination of features that defines each of the claims, not just individual features.

CONCLUSION

Entry of this Amendment After Final is respectfully requested in that it constitutes a complete reply to this final rejection under 37 CFR 1.116. In view of the above amendment, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending application is in condition for allowance.

However, should the Examiner believe that any outstanding matters remain in the present application, the Examiner is requested to contact Jason Rhodes (Reg. No. 47,305) at the telephone number of the undersigned to discuss the application in an effort to expedite prosecution.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: November 9, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

By 

Michael K. Mutter

Registration No.: 29,680

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

8110 Gatehouse Rd

Suite 100 East

P.O. Box 747

Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747

(703) 205-8000

Attorney for Applicant